

REMARKS

Claims 1, 2, 4-11 and 29-35, and 37-50 are currently pending in the application. Claims 3 and 36 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, and claims 1, 29, and 38 have been amended. Claim 1 has been amended by deleting the adjective "sharp" objected to by the Examiner and introducing the radius of curvature language of claim 3. Claim 29 has been similarly amended. Claim 38 has been amended by deleting the adjective "comparable" objected to by the Examiner and inserting the teaching at page 31, lines 17-30 of the application. Applicants respectfully assert that no new matter has been added and request reconsideration of the claims currently pending in the application.

In paragraph 4 on page 2 of the Office Action, claims 1-11 and 29-50 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112 second paragraph for being indefinite. The Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection, but have amended the application to overcome the objections. Claims 1, 29, and 38 have been amended. Applicants respectfully assert that all claims comply with 35 U.S.C. § 112 and request that the rejections be withdrawn.

In paragraph 6 on page 3 of the Office Action, claims 1-2, 5-7, and 10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102 (b) as being anticipated by Jansen, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,736,113). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections for the following reason.

Jansen does not disclose a mandrel edge corresponding to the edge of the leaflets, which edge has a radius of curvature of no more than about 0.25 millimeters, as claimed in amended claim 1. Amended claim 1 is clearly allowable over Jansen. Claims 2, 5-7, and 10 depend from claim 1 and are allowable with claim 1.

In paragraph 7 on page 4 of the Office Action, claims 1-2, 5-7, 10, and 30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102 (b) as being anticipated by NL 1008349. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections for the following reason. NL1008349 does not disclose a mandrel edge corresponding to the edge of the leaflets, which edge has a radius of curvature of no more than about 0.25 millimeters, as claimed in amended claim 1. Amended claim 1 is clearly allowable over NL 1008349. Claims 2, 5-7, 10, and 30 depend from claim 1 and are allowable with claim 1.

In paragraph 8 on page 5 of the Office Action, claims 1, 8, 11, 29, and 31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102 (b) as being anticipated by Pierce, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,364,127). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections for the following reason. Pierce does not disclose a mandrel edge corresponding to the edge of the leaflets, which edge has a radius of curvature of no more than about 0.25 millimeters, as claimed in amended claims 1 and 29. Amended claims 1 and 29 are clearly allowable over Pierce. Claims 8, 11, and 31 depend from claim 1 and are allowable with claim 1.

To anticipate a claim, the reference must teach every element of the claim. "A claim is anticipated only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described, in a single prior art reference." Verdegaal Bros. v. Union Oil Co. of California, 2 USPQ2d 1051, 1053 (Fed. Cir. 1987). "The identical invention must be shown in as complete detail as is contained in the ... claim." Richardson v. Suzuki Motor Co., 9 USPQ2d 1913, 1920 (Fed. Cir. 1989). Therefore, all claim elements, and their limitations, must be found in the prior art reference to maintain a rejection based on 35 U.S.C. §102. Applicants respectfully submit that neither Jansen

nor NL 1008349 nor Pierce teaches every element of claims 1 and 29 and therefore fails to anticipate these independent claims.

With respect to the dependent claims discussed above, while Applicants do not acquiesce with the particular rejections to these dependent claims, it is believed that these rejections are moot in view of the remarks made in connection with independent claims 1 and 29. These dependent claims include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims, and recite additional features which further distinguish these claims from the cited references. Therefore, the dependent claims discussed above are also in condition for allowance.

Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-2, 5-7, and 10 under 35 U.S.C. §102 (b) as being anticipated by Jansen, et al.

Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-2, 5-7, 10, and 30 under 35 U.S.C. §102 (b) as being anticipated by NL 1008349.

Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1, 8, 11, 29, and 31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102 (b) as being anticipated by Pierce, et al.

In paragraph 10 on page 6 of the Office Action, claims 3-4, 9, and 32-34 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Jansen, et al. or NL 1008349 in view of Moe, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,174,331) and Stockum (U.S. Patent No. 4,135,867). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections for the following reasons. Claim 3 has been cancelled. Claims 4, 9, and 32-34 depend from amended claim 1 which has been discussed above. Neither Moe nor Stockum supplies the deficiencies in Jansen et al or NL1008349 noted above in the discussion relating to the Section 102

rejections, namely the failure to disclose a mandrel edge corresponding to the edge of the leaflets, which edge has a radius of curvature of no more than about 0.25 millimeters.

In paragraph 11 on page 8 of the Office Action, claim 35 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Jansen, et al. or NL 1008349 in view of Hennig, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,575,442). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection for the following reasons. Claim 35 depends from claim 1. Hennig et al. does not satisfy the deficiencies noted above for Jansen et al. and NL 1008349.

In paragraph 12 on page 9 of the Office Action, claim 36 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Pierce, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,364,127) in view of Moe, et al. Since claim 36 has been cancelled, this rejection is moot.

Three criteria must be met to establish a prima facie case of obviousness. First, there must be some suggestion or motivation, either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, to modify the reference. Second, there must be a reasonable expectation of success. Finally, the prior art reference, or combination of references, must teach or suggest all the claim limitations. MPEP § 2142. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections since the prior art fails to disclose all the claim limitations and there would be no motivation to combine the references as proposed by the Examiner.

Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection of claims 3-4, 9, and 32-34 which are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being anticipated over Jansen, et al. or NL 1008349 in view of Moe, et al. and Stockum.

Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection of claim 35 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being anticipated over Jansen, et al. or NL 1008349 in view of Hennig, et al.

In view of the amendments and reasons provided above, it is believed that all pending claims are in condition for allowance. Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration and early allowance of all pending claims.

If a telephone conference would be helpful in resolving any issues concerning this communication, please contact Applicants' attorney of record, Hallie A. Finucane at (952) 253-4134.

Respectfully submitted,

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